

# Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association Membership Application and Agreement

## Mission, Organizational Background, and Benefits

Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association (OSGATA) develops, protects and promotes the organic seed trade and its growers, and assures that the organic community has access to excellent quality organic seed, free of contaminants and adapted to the diverse needs of local organic agriculture.

Background: The creation of a healthy organic seed trade is paramount to the success of the National Organic Program (NOP). Organic farmers require quality organic seed in order to meet NOP guidelines, but more importantly, to maximize the overall integrity and success of their organic system. At the onset of the organic rule (October, 2002), a clear lack of organic seed quantity and quality required the NOP to develop an exemption for the use of organic seed. While the exemption is necessary at present, no farmer should lack the seed best suited for their production and market. Additionally, organic seed systems face risks from transgenic contamination, with many unanswered questions and concerns such as who should be responsible for testing organic seed for the presence of contamination. The promotion and development of a vibrant organic seed trade will result in the manifestation of seed systems suited to the ecological, economic, local, and sustainable challenges and needs of organic farming.

Organic Seed Alliance, as 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a focus on education and research, cannot perform the functions of lobbying and policy work. Instead, OSA has elected to found and incubate this new organization that will allow seed growers and others involved in the seed trade to address issues of mutual concern on business and policy levels. We hope that this will be a venue in which we can resolve differences and create strategies to improve the seed trade on a national level.

Members benefits include:

- Inclusion in building a policy platform for promoting, protecting and developing the organic seed trade's interests
- Cross promotion of member products and services
- Inclusion on a seed list-serve which include newsletter and action updates
- State and federal lobbying services
- Political action on state and federal level, including farm bill
- Discounted consultation services from Organic Seed Alliance
- Discounted registration for Organic Seed Growers Conference, workshop, and events

Please read supportive documentation for full description of bylaws and organizational profile.

## Our Policy

It is the policy of this organization to provide equal opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual preference, age, or disability.

OSGATA reserves the right to approve memberships based upon professional status or rescind membership if any person/organization acts contrary to the by-laws of the organization. Specifically, by signing this application/agreement, all applicants agree to the following Code of Ethics.

### **ARTICLE 8- Code of Ethics**

§ 8.1 No Member shall knowingly deal in products that are falsely labeled organic, or represented as such, nor engage in any advertising that is false or misleading.

§ 8.2 Given the risk of contamination and/or comingling of germplasm from genetically engineered organisms with organic seed stock, along with the potential weakening of end user confidence in organic seed integrity from such contamination, *no Member shall knowingly grow, sell, distribute, or breed GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) seeds or products.*

§ 8.3 All members shall cooperate in the development of the market for organic seed and compete with each other in an honest and friendly fashion.

§ 8.4 All members shall cooperate in the development of an organic seed system which enhances life and health, is ecologically and economically sustainable, and gives a fair return and dignity to its producers, handlers and merchants.

§ 8.5 A Member in his/her personal conduct and in his/her contacts with customers and the public should not behave in a manner which brings discredit on OSGATA or himself/herself.

## Membership Types

Please indicate the appropriate membership type:

**Producer Members** shall be individual farmers who produce certified organic seed.

**Professional Members** shall be independent and/or public plant breeders working to breed for organic systems.

**Business Members** shall be individual seed companies or other businesses engaged in the sale and/or handling of certified organic seed.

**Affiliate Organization Members** shall be organizations which the Board of Directors determines to be compatible with the goals and objectives of OSGATA.

**Associate Members** are individuals (including gardeners, non-seed farmers, consumers) and businesses interested in supporting the goals and objectives of OSGATA and receiving OSGATA information.

## Professional Affiliation

Which one of the categories best defines your seed activities

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seed Farmer               | <input type="checkbox"/> Seed Company (sales)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Breeder    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seed Company (breeding)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Seed Company (mgmt)       | <input type="checkbox"/> University Breeder     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seed Company (production) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (seed technologies) | <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliate Organization |

## Interests

Tell us in which areas you are interested in working on potential OSGATA committees

- Board of Directors
- Membership/Outreach
- Fundraising for special initiatives
- NOP/NOSB
- Contamination Issues
- Other:

## Dues Payment

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Producer Member  | \$75    |
| Professional Member                                    | \$75    |
| Affiliate Membership                                   | TBD     |
| Business Member < \$500K sales                         | \$250   |
| Business Member \$500K-\$1m sales                      | \$500   |
| Business Member > 1m sales                             | \$1,000 |
| Associate Membership                                   | \$40    |
| Additional contribution to OSGATA special initiatives* |         |
| Total  |         |

\*Contributions are deductible as business expenses, but not as charitable donations.

## Contact Information

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Name                 |  |
| Business Name        |  |
| Address              |  |
| City, State Zip Code |  |
| Work Phone           |  |
| Cell Phone           |  |
| E-Mail Address       |  |
| Web Site             |  |

## Agreement and Signature

By submitting this application, I affirm that the facts set forth in it are true and complete. I understand that if I am accepted as a member, any false statements, omissions, or other misrepresentations made by me on this application may result in immediate loss of membership.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Name (printed)     |  |
| For (organization) |  |
| Signature          |  |
| Date               |  |

## Issues, ideas, and intent

Please send this completed application with check payable to OSGATA, and any comments or ideas you might have to:

OSGATA  
PO Box 697  
Port Townsend, WA 98368  
360/385-7192  
www.osgata.org  
osgata@gmail.com